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A
BRIEF HISTORY
OF
PUBLIC PROCEEDINGS
AND EVENTS,
LEGAL,—PARLIAMENTARY,—AND
MISCELLANEOUS,
IN THE
PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA,
DURING THE EARLIEST YEARS OF
THE PRESENT CENTURY.

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BRITISH LITERATURE

THE HISTORY OF

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BRIEF HISTORY, &c.

During several late years I have been frequently and urgently solicited to compose and publish a work, concerning political and other public events and affairs, which occurred in this Province, in the earliest part of the present century. I long hesitated to comply with the desire, doubting whether such a work would be of any important public advantage, but late thoughts and views on the subject have led me to conclude that the information it will convey, and the appropriate or corresponding remarks which may be offered concerning many, if not all, of the subjects treated of, may, in some degree, be useful, as to future public proceedings regarding provincial affairs and prosperity. Probably, there is not, now, another living person, who has any personal knowledge of most of the proceedings and events which I shall here narrate. Being now near the close of my ninety-third year, and having commenced the study of my profession in this city in 1804, and obtained admission to the Bar in 1808, nearly 71 years ago; and having become a member of the Legislature in 1811,—the only surviving member of that date,—I *can*, therefore, and *do* write from a personal knowledge of all the public matters and events of which I shall treat. From these particulars it may readily be concluded, that I must, in a large degree, possess a knowledge of those early public affairs in the Province, of a legal, and also of a political nature, and of various other descriptions.

It does not seem requisite to make any further explanations or remarks, and I will therefore proceed to treat of those public affairs, under the convenient and appropriate arrangement and titles of,—Law,—Parliamentary and Political,—Miscellaneous.

I.—LAW.

It may be interesting to my readers, and especially to those of the legal fraternity, to give, first; some brief descriptions of the membership of the Bench and the Bar, in the year 1804, and which remained the same during several succeeding years. The Chief on the Bench was Sampson S. Blowers, truly eminent for a high standard of legal knowledge, logical skill, and power of argument and chasteness and attractiveness of language; and whose exhibitions of those high qualities and endowments afforded intellectual enjoyment to those who possessed a capacity to desire it, and for its due estimation. He was then in the zenith of his ability and eminence. He had two assistants, if indeed they could, with propriety, be thus named, for they were far advanced in years, and on all the mental and legal qualifications for the office, were far below their chief; but were of equal judicial integrity. One of them had, in the earlier periods of his life, been a military warrior, but for reasons, no doubt perfectly satisfactory to himself,—

He left the cold unwholesome Trench,
And took a seat upon the Bench.

During those earliest years the Chief Justice tried all the causes, and delivered the decisions on legal argument; on these latter occasions, the two associates merely assenting.

In reference to the Bar, Richard J. Uniacke, the Attorney General, must first be noticed. On many points he was a most extraordinary and remarkable person. He may, indeed, be said to have ranked in the gigantic order, or class of humanity, both as to bodily proportions, and mental powers. I have travelled extensively, in many countries, and neither in courts of law, parliaments, or general society have I met with his equal, as to the combination of all those qualities. It was most interesting, as well as entertaining, to hear him in any specially important case. His force of fluent language, versatility of views and ideas, vast range of knowledge, and style of remark,—this latter, at times, rather irrelevant,—his *sarcasm*, *humour*, and *invective* when he chose to employ them, and his various illustrations, were truly amazing. His voice and style of address were extremely forcible, and it seemed as easy for him to speak, as to breathe. I recollect hearing him speak for about four hours, without intermission, in a law argument; during which I think he cited about *fifty* or more cases. The Chief Justice seemed to be tired of it, for he sat, a large part of the time, with his head bent down, his elbows on his desk, and the knuckles of his hands pressed on his forehead.

The Solicitor General, James Stewart, Esq., could not be called eminent in the profession, but possessed a good degree of mental power, and of legal and other attainments. He became one of the Judges. The universally admitted *premier* at the Bar, for enlarged and solid legal knowledge, was Foster Hutchinson, but he was not, in popular estimation, what is called eloquent,

but always exhibited matured reason and judgement, and was skilful and *thoroughly reliable* in counsel, and strict legal argument. He also became a Judge of the Supreme Court. The other members of the Bar, residing in Halifax, during those early years, were,—S. B. Robie, —Lewis M. Wilkins, the father of the present retired Judge,—Crofton Uniacke, and the talented and highly esteemed Brenton Haliburton, who remained but a short time at the Bar, and, in or about 1810, was appointed an assistant Judge, and after several years of able and very highly estimated performance of the duties of that office, he became Chief Justice, and received the honor of knighthood. S. G. W. Archibald, in the latter part of that early period, came into practice at the Halifax Bar,

continued to attend it regularly for several years, before becoming a permanent inhabitant of the city. My own practice, here, commenced in 1816,—the previous eight years, while resident in Pictou, being spent in attending the court on some of its circuits. Other members of the Bar, during a later course of years, need not be named, as there are very many living persons who were acquainted with them. In those early years, and until about 1810, there were only 8 or 9 Barristers residing in the city, which, I think, during that period, contained a resident population of between 15 and 20 thousand. The present population is not much over 30,000, if so large, and I see by the Almanac of this year, that nearly *seventy* of the profession are named as being resident in the city, which, I presume, will be generally thought an ample number to fulfil all our litigating and other legal desires and purposes. In those

former days, there were only *two* of the profession in Truro, *two* in Pictou, *one* or *two* in Cumberland, but *not one* either in Antigonish or Guysborough.

During those early times the journeying on the circuit practice was very far more unfavorable than in later years, as to speed, comfort, and several other particulars. My first experience on these points, commenced in 1807. My kind and always firm and valuable friend, Mr. Wilkins, with whom I was pursuing my legal studies, being under severe sickness, he assigned to me the pleasing duty of attending in the summer of that year on the Eastern circuit, on which he had extensive practice, for the purpose of making the best arrangements concerning the causes in which he was retained. The Judge for that circuit was the early *warrior* previously mentioned. He was of a very bulky and ponderous bodily form, and thereby unable to use a horse as he did when a *military major*, and consequently, he journeyed in a vehicle, then generally called a chaise, or as a rustic would style it, a *shay*. I had the honor and pleasure of journeying in company with Messrs. Robie and Archibald and the witty and facetious Andrew Wallace. We were on horseback, and the first day reached, and spent the night at the Inn at Gays River,—distance about 36 miles,—a very fair journey for those days of rough, crooked, and hilly roads. I well remember a scene of that night. The heat was excessive, and about midnight my companions commenced a *serenading visitation*, and came into my room, apparelled in white sheets, doubtless thinking that I would be greatly startled and terrified, supposing it to be a ghostly visit, but they did not succeed on that

point, but merely in producing general merriment. The next day we halted at Truro, and on the third reached Pictou. At that time, and for several succeeding years, the travelling, except on *runners* in winter, was almost invariably on horseback; and for three days from Halifax to Pictou, and four to Amherst.

The proceedings in the court, in those early years, I can confidently say, were conducted, as to the Bench, with dignity, and with due respect from the Bar; and among the members of the latter, with becoming courtesy, and an avoidance of wrangling, or unseemly strife or contention. The admission to practice, *then*, were as Attorney and Barrister at the same time, and might also be so obtained into the courts of Chancery, and Vice Admiralty, and as a Notary Public. The present rule of a prescribed time between the admission as Attorney and as Barrister, is certainly the better arrangement. I think it not at all presumptuous, to take this fit opportunity, of offering some remarks regarding the *right or title* for obtaining the *honors* of the profession, as to both the Bar and the Bench. All the members of the *legal*, as well as those in the other learned professions, and of all civil offices, should, in justice, be equally entitled to obtain the honors which respectively belong to those professions and offices, and other public employments, according to seniority of standing and service,—the circumstances as to knowledge, skill, experience, and on other essential or material points, being superior, or but equal. This was the general and just course, or it may even be said the rule, in those early years, as to the Bar and Bench; and it

was carried out accordingly, until the introduction of the political system which,—as to this subject,—is improperly called *liberal*. Since this change, which has been made to operate so unjustly towards the legal profession, and indeed as to many other public appointments and subjects, the official honours in the profession, are, almost invariably, bestowed on the political partizans of the existing executive ruling powers. This is a signal injustice as regards both the Bar and the Bench; and is injurious to the public, when a junior member of the Bar, or one of but limited practice, and of ordinary or inferior talents and attainments, is appointed to its highest offices; or one of a similar character is raised to the most important and responsible office of a Judge. The population of every country are entitled to obtain for the management of their public affairs of every description, and in all the public offices, the selection and appointment of the persons who are best qualified as to mental talent, enlarged experience, and on all other points, are thoroughly fitted for skilfully and faithfully fulfilling their duties, and thereby promoting and sustaining the public welfare. In making these remarks, I have no intention or thought as to their application to any particular or recent instances of appointments to offices in this Province.

I may further remark, as to the legal profession, that the combination of the duties of the Attorney and Barrister, in the same person is, in many respects, preferable to the opposite rule in England, where, in ancient, and even modern times, the former could not, as to social position be admitted to private intercourse

and companionship with the Counsel or Barrister. This would have been considered an act of impropriety, and undue condescension by the latter.

There is one subject which at that early period came under legal discussion, in this Province, on which it may be interesting to the public to be informed, and of which, I feel confident, but very few if any of our population, except myself, have any knowledge whatever. It is that of the atrocious slave system. My readers will doubtless be startled at the thought, or supposition, that it could ever have been a question, whether that cruel outrage on humanity, ever existed in this Province. But the question did arise, and was legally argued and decided. I think it was in the year 1806. Before relating the case in which the decision was given, I must state some preliminary facts relating to the subject.—During the progress, and especially at the close of the revolutionary war in the British Provinces, now the United States, rather large numbers of the loyalist families left those lands, and came to Nova Scotia, which then included New Brunswick, and as I think the Islands of Cape Breton and St. John,—this latter now named Prince Edward. A large number of them settled in Shelburne. Several of these loyal or *refugee* families, as they were often called, brought with them in their service, individuals of the slave population, who came with the families, either from kind attachment to them, or hoping thus to secure their freedom. One of them abruptly left his master's service, in Shelburne, and came to Halifax. The master pursued him, and by some legal process, or other means, procured

his arrest, and was about to convey him back to Shelburne. Application on his behalf was made to Mr. Wilkins, who obtained a writ of *habeas corpus*, under which master and servant were brought before the Chief Justice, and the case, and the slave question were fully argued on each side, and the Judge legally and righteously decided, that this Province was not debased with that cruel and abominable slave system, which John Wesley appropriately characterized, as "*the sum of all villainies.*" Thus the subject as to our free country, was settled for all time.

I may here mention, that the matters in controversy in suits at law, in the common law courts in those days, were of much the same descriptions as at present, and therefore special remarks here on the subject are not needed.

Having treated concerning the Supreme Court so fully as probably to weary some of my readers, I will now give some important and interesting information concerning proceedings in the Vice Admiralty Court, which in the same early period had ample and almost constant employment. In the year 1804, the great Napoleon, having subdued Italy and Spain, and overcome and prostrated Austria and Prussia, and spread the terror of his name and army over all the other nations of continental Europe; and knowing that the power and resources of Great Britain, with whom he was so fiercely contending greatly depended on the prosperity of her foreign commerce, he framed and published two manifestoes, one at Berlin the capital of Prussia, and the other at Milan in Italy, named and known as the

celebrated "Berlin and Milan Decrees." They were most restrictive and prohibitory as to the British foreign trade, especially with European powers, and the United States of America, whose commerce had increased with amazing rapidity, although then only in the twenty-third year of their independence. By way of retaliation, and for the protection of her commerce, and for other political purposes, the British Government published "Orders of Council," also restrictive as to the trade of neutrals with France, and other Powers in hostility with Great Britain. For strictly carrying these orders into effect, Judges of Vice Admiralty Courts, of the highest ability, were appointed in the British colonies; and Alexander Croke, L. L. D., one of the most learned and eminent advocates in the High Court of Admiralty, was appointed as judge of the Vice Admiralty Court in Halifax. About the same time, Mr. Jeffrey came as Collector of the Customs. The orders in Council speedily produced abundant results, in the seizure by the British Naval Cruisers of a large number of vessels, charged with trading with France, in contravention of those orders, and of the general national laws and regulations regarding trade between neutrals and belligerents. The commerce of the United States chiefly and extensively suffered by those seizures. In 1805 their vessels trading with France and her possessions, and those of her allies and supporters, and especially the vessels running between France, the United States, and the Spanish Provinces in South America, were, day after day, being brought into this port, and libelled in the Admiralty Court. In that year I resided in a board-

ing house, where a number of the masters and supercar-
goes of those United States prizes boarded, and I often
heard their *maledictions* against Great Britain and her
cruisers. Several of the prizes had very rich cargoes of
silks, cambrics, lace, and other choice and costly articles.
The Attorney General, Richard J. Uniacke, previously
mentioned and described, conducted all the prosecutions
as Advocate for the Crown, and Mr. Stewart, the Solic-
itor General, the defences of the Claimants. It has been
supposed that the income of the former official, from
those prosecutions and in other duties and matters re-
garding the prizes, amounted to £10,000 or more, and
probably that of the Solicitor General from the Claimants
was nearly the same. Other members of the profession
also partook, in a very liberal degree, in the *golden* re-
wards for their services in the proceedings. It was
truly, all round, a most lucrative and gratifying time for
our legal fraternity, as well as several other classes of
the community. I will remember the argument of Mr.
Uniacke in one of those prize cases. The vessel was
fitted out for *buttle* if pursued, or met with by one of the
small gun boats, or other but slightly armed cruiser. On
her deck was an immense cannon, which was called
Long Tom. In the course of the trial Mr. Uniacke
made pointed reference to this thundering and destructive
weapon, as proof that the vessel was engaged in an un-
lawful or forbidden trade; and urged his address in such
terms as these,—“And then, your Worship, they had
their Long Tom loaded and primed and ready for fight;”
and thus, occasionally he would remind the judge of
Long Tom, as affording such condemnatory evidence;

and truly it was such, for if engaged in a lawful and unprohibited trade, they did not require that monstrous iron warrior. Those proceedings in the Admiralty Court continued, with much the same vigor and results, for several years, and there can be little doubt, but what the great injury thus inflicted on the foreign commerce of the United States, was one of the *provocations* to the war they declared against Great Britain a few years after. Such proceedings, and numerous others of an unrighteous character, often lead to further contentions, or open hostilities between nations; and serve to show the wicked and ruinous nature of all national wars. Judge Croke held the office,—then of such great importance,—for a number of years, and with most distinguished ability; and on his return to England was Knighted. His arguments, in the decision of any specially important case would afford intellectual enjoyment to all who could duly appreciate them, for the orderly arrangements of the various points, the precision and soundness of logical argument, chasteness of language, dignity and attractiveness of address, and all the other qualities which constitute the highest style of judicial skill, eloquence, and ability. I remember one instance, especially, in which I experienced a degree of that enjoyment, in hearing his eloquent and powerful argument, in a decision on one of those prize cases.

There are no other subjects or events, of a legal nature, in those early years, within my recollection at present, of sufficient importance to require mention or remark, and therefore I will here close this portion of my work.

II.—PARLIAMENTARY AND POLITICAL.

The first event of a parliamentary nature, within my remembrance, which I deem worthy of relation, occurred in 1806 or 1807. There had been a general election for the House of Assembly, and when it met in session, a member for the County of Hants, named William Cotnam Tonge, was chosen speaker. He was a generally popular person, and possessed rather superior powers of oratory, and in political propensities and opinions, may be classed with the *liberals*, or probably the *radicals* of that period. He had been in the preceding assembly, and had *there* it was supposed, in some way, committed, or had actually committed some public act of disrespect or discourtesy towards the Lieutenant Governor,—Sir John Wentworth; and either by Sir John himself, or through the influence of the government, it was concluded, that if Tonge was chosen speaker, he should, when presented, as usual, for approval be, for that discourtesy, rejected by the governor. Mr. Wilkins, with whom I was studying, being a member, and also my venerated father, I felt much interest, and also curiosity concerning the matter, and Tonge being chosen, when the House proceeded to his Excellency's presence, I followed in their rear, and got a stand near the foot of the table, and had a full view of Sir John, in his Chair of State. and heard his words of rejection of Tonge, which were *these*, as I have constantly remembered,—“Gentlemen, I do not approve of your choice, and I desire that you will return to your chamber, (or room) and elect another of your members, as speaker, and present him for my approval, to-morrow at”—naming the hour.

Sir John who was not very dignified in appearance, but rather of gentle disposition and manners, placed his three cornered black hat on his head,—the House retired,—and the imposing scene closed. Immediately great searching commenced into Hatsell and an older work for precedents and a decision on the important point. Some of the more ardent spirits were for again presenting Tonge, according to the somewhat similar case of Wilkes in the British Parliament, who was several times *elected*, and refused a seat in the Commons, because of the publication of his radical tract number 45. During the day, and by the next morning, the members had cooled down, and when again assembled, elected another member as speaker,—I think, Attorney General R. J. Uniacke, who received approval and the Session commenced.

In a Session of the same House, a few years after, Tonge retaliated on Sir John, for his rejection, in the way I will now relate. The Home Government, very properly decided to remove Sir John, who was very far advanced in years. He had been a governor in one of the smaller revolted colonies. Sir George Prevost, a Lieutenant General, was appointed as his successor, and the British Government allowed £500, sterling, towards a retiring pension for Sir John, and recommended a similar sum to be granted by the Province, so as to make the pension £1,000. On the proposal being submitted to the House, Tonge in opposing it took the opportunity to review public affairs, and all the measures of the Government, during the whole term of Sir John's administration. He had a right to do so, and he

doubtless did it with all the power of severe and eloquent speech which he was so well able to employ. I met my old Grammar School master,—Rev. George Wright,—retiring from the lobby, and he remarked as to the *philippic*, as he properly called it, and I went in and heard some part of it. I believe it filled up the entire sitting of the day, but it did not avail for effecting the intended purpose. The £500 were granted and Sir John got his £1,000 pension, but lived in its enjoyment but a few years.

In 1811 there was a general election for the Assembly, and I was elected one of the members for the County of Sydney, as it was then named, and for many years after; and which then combined the present Counties of Antigonish and Guysborough. There was a close and keen contest for the Speakership, and my friend, Mr. Wilkins, succeeded, by a small majority, in preference to Mr. Robie, his competitor. An extremely singular case arose, from the election for the township of Truro. The candidates were Mr. Pierson and Mr. Kent. It so happened that a man, deaf and dumb, gave the one majority vote for Mr. Kent. A resolution was moved, stating that this man, by reason of those imperfections, was not entitled to vote, and it passed, and Pierson took the seat. A counter resolution was prepared, I think, by myself, stating, that although deaf and dumb, he was "of sane and intelligent mind, and capable of communicating his ideas and opinions, by bodily signs and motions." The next day this resolution was submitted, and after a short debate, was passed, and Mr. Pierson vacated the seat, and Mr. Kent took it. Some of us

humorously styled him the silent, or deaf and dumb member; but he was a sensible man, in the first rank of the indispensable and honorable farming class, and could, and did, deliver his opinions creditably, as often as was needed. It might be well if there were more of the most intelligent of that class in every parliament. I may here mention that I saw the same deaf and dumb man admitted and examined as a witness in the Supreme Court at Truro, in a case of illegitimate child-murder, and it was chiefly on his evidence that the prisoner was convicted.

The regular hour for assembling was 10 o'clock, and the sittings generally continued until 4 or 5 in the afternoon. The public business, I can aver, was, in those days, diligently attended to and dispatched. The sessions, on an average, continued about 10 weeks. The debates were conducted with far more courtesy and moderation than those in the parliaments of the present day. Rarely, indeed, was there any personal bitterness, or asperity, rude epithets, or severe accusations, or unbecoming language, all of which have been, so often, and discredibly employed, in parliaments in later times.

To the best of my recollection, never during those early years of legislation was a charge of bribery made against any member. The oppositions to elections which came before the Assembly related chiefly to the qualifications of Candidates or voters.

As well as I can remember, it was in the session of 1815, that a bounty on salt was granted, of two shillings and sixpence per ton, when the price at public sale, on importation, fell short of twenty shillings. It

seemed to be a measure to serve the interested purposes of a few importing merchants. The instance I will now relate, contributed, I believe, to its discontinuance. At the sale of a cargo, or large quantity of the article, imported into Pictou, a purchaser was at liberty to take the portion or lot offered by the auctioneer, or the whole quantity. A farming person, not at all engaged in any fishery, made the offer of seventeen shillings and ninepence, per ton, for the portion put up, and then said he would take the whole cargo. He purchased it merely for the importing merchants, who, in that way, secured to themselves the bounty on the whole quantity. I was present on the occasion, and was so sensible of the way in which the affair was managed, that I said to one of the importing firm, who was present, you might as well have had it purchased in for seventeen shillings and sixpence, for then you would have got the whole bounty, but now you will only get two shillings and threepence per ton. The same, or similar selfish public impositions, are, doubtless, frequently, or occasionally, practiced, in cases of bounties. I may here offer the opinion, that bounties in trading and commercial business; and also what are called *protecting* regulations and measures in those affairs, are almost invariably found to operate, merely to the profit of a few, and either directly or indirectly, to increase the prices of articles of general consumption; and, in other ways, injuriously affect the great body of the population. For the general prosperity and welfare of a state, trade and business of every description, should be left as unrestricted and free as possible, consistent with the just duties and taxation which are

required for the support of the indispensable and necessary institutions and measures of the public service. This, I believe, has always been the opinion of the most intelligent and best informed political economists.

In the Session of the Legislature in 1819 the present just and equitable law was passed, authorizing the direction of Licenses for Marriage to ministers of all religious denominations. The right of obtaining such Licenses had previously been confined to the clergy of the Church of England Establishment.

In the Session of 1821, under Sir James Kempt's government of the Province, the Act was passed for the establishment of Dalhousie College. At this time all the honorary Degrees of Kings College,—Windsor,—the only one in the Province,—were confined to members of the Church of England Establishment. It was chiefly this unwise and unjust restriction which suggested and righteously led to the establishment of the Dalhousie Institution. There have been frequent discussions, and opposite opinions expressed, as to whether it was designed by the Legislature to be a Provincial Institution. I was a member of the Assembly at the time, and know most or all of the material circumstances relating to the subject, and I can confidently say that it was intended to be of that provincial character and consequently, on every point, open to persons of all religious denominations and all classes of society.

The next parliamentary subject, of a general nature to be here mentioned and explained, is one in which I was personally and especially interested and engaged. Before introducing it, I think I may, with propriety,

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mention, as being connected with that subject, that in 1819, I made my first essay in book composition, and published a small work, noticing the designs of the American United States to gain possession of these British Provinces; and also describing the numerous and valuable natural resources and advantages of Nova Scotia, and suggesting the means whereby they might, in the greatest degree, be made to promote the public prosperity. One of these means was the encouragement and assistance of immigration for effecting the clearance and settlement of our forest lands, especially those owned by non-residents, and others, who had failed to clear and improve them. The only copy of the book which remained with me, I have lately given to the library of the Young Men's Christian Association. In pursuance of the objects and intentions set forth in that publication, and towards effecting their fulfilment, I sought and obtained the best information on the several subjects, and prepared a rather voluminous bill, for compelling the owners of those lands to immediately clear and improve them; and on their failing to do it, that the lands should be escheated to the Crown, for being re-granted to those who would occupy and improve them. The Bill contained numerous and needful provisions and regulations on the subject, and was also intended, as I have mentioned, to encourage and promote that needed and useful immigration. The bill met with rather strong opposition in the assembly, but after several debates, it succeeded there, by a small majority, and went up to the council, where, as I have understood, one of the Crown officers spent about three or four hours in killing it.

Thus ended, as far as I know, all parliamentary efforts relating to that land subject. I am presumptuous and bold enough to say, that if that bill had passed, and those, its main objects, had been carried into effect, instead of our having now only the slender and discredibly humble population of about 400,000, it would be nearly, if not quite, a million. A much larger population than we now possess is indispensably needed, in order to bring into full and more profitable operation, the numerous and most valuable natural resources of our country, so as to secure, in a far greater degree, its political and social prosperity, with reference to manufactures, *internal*, as well as *foreign*, trade, and especially the far greater extension and profitable results of our agricultural employments. I may forbear any further remarks here on these subjects. They will more appropriately be given under the third and last title, where they will be discussed, in relation to the resources, the commerce, and other subjects, bearing on the general interests and prosperity of the Province. There is one subject, and it is an important one, of a parliamentary and political nature, which I think it well to notice, and remark thereon.

During all the time previous to the introduction of the so-called liberal policy, any member, when the House was in the appropriate committee, or, indeed, at any other suitable time, could, without previous application to any quarter, propose a resolution, or move for a grant of money for any public purpose whatever, and the House would immediately act thereon, either by allowing or refusing it. The present policy will not allow

or sanction such a proceeding. The governing powers for the time—some of whom must be in the House—have now the sole right of proposing all money grants; and without their permission, no other members can move for any such grant. This was one of the relinquishments and concessions which was made to the Executive Power, by the liberal party, when that policy was agreed on and established. It was made, as being in conformity with the Imperial Constitution. Either an adherent of the existing government, or an opposing member therefore before proposing any such grant with any hope of success must now seek and obtain the favour and permission of the executive members, to propose it to the House. It always has been, and it is probable will ever continue to be true, not only in political, but in all other worldly spheres of action and affairs, that whosoever holds the *purse*, holds the *power*. The rule just mentioned, is nearly as injudicious and restrictive, as to popular freedom and right, as that of the bestowment of all public offices, by the ruling political party, on their own partisans, without due regard to superior qualifications and meritorious claims. These, and other political arrangements and measures, serve to show, that after all that can be said in favour of the present governing policy, the former old Tory Government so called, and its policy, were administered with quite as much regard to public freedom and justice, as under the present political system, if not indeed in a greater degree.

III.—MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS, &c.

In the year 1806 a French fleet made a descent upon Newfoundland, and committed some depredations at a place called the Bay of Bulls. We expected that they would be bold enough to visit Halifax. At that time, and during the whole course of that war with France, a much larger military force was kept in this garrison than in later years,—two or three regiments,—numbering with the artillery force, probably near 3,000. There was also a more numerous fleet on the station than at present. Our Wentworth Government however, very properly considered, that it was quite appropriate, if not absolutely needful, that the population of the Province should take a part in its defence; and accordingly, a requisite portion of the militia was drafted for active service, and came to Halifax. My military ardour, at that time, being very much stronger than it has been for many years past, I obtained a commission in my father's battalion, a portion of which composed a part of that formidable garrison force. I well remember being, with many others, of similar deficiencies in the *fiery* service, frequently drilled and instructed in the spacious square of the old North Barracks which some years ago were burnt to the ground. The hostile fleet took wit in their anger, and departed to other seas, and the militia garrison were dismissed after a few months of not very arduous or dangerous service.

In the same year 1806, or the preceding one, as well as I remember, that great encroachment on per-

sonal liberty called, *impressment* was resorted to, in this port, among the merchant and other shipping, and also in the town; and was actively carried out by numerous press gangs from the naval force. They planned and managed the adventure very adroitly, and with numerous squads swept the streets of the town in every quarter, seizing on every person whom they imagined was liable or in any way fit for their service. The military force, as may well be supposed, acted in concert with them. The main guard of the troops was then stationed in a small barrack, with an open area, for drill and other purposes, fronting on Barrington Street, where the "Right Market" now stands; and the whole enclosure extended up to Argyle street, where, now is the Acadian School building. In that open space of that military ground the *captives* of that memorable night were forcibly conveyed, and formed a numerous crowd of all classes and descriptions of the population. In the morning, as I presume, interrogations and examinations were made by the self-appointed naval judges for such occasions, and after their selections of all such, as in their good pleasure they determined to retain, the rest of the miscellaneous crowd were set at liberty. There is one instance partly of an amusing description, which occurred during this impressment season, which I will here relate. A fisherman residing in one of the small settlements on this Eastern coast was arrested by the press gang and detained for the service. Mr. Wilkins being employed in the case, obtained a writ of Habeas Corpus, under which the man, by a young naval officer with a party of his men, was brought before the Chief

Justice for examination in order to obtain his release. On a due hearing of the case, the Judge decided that he was not liable to impressment for the service, and accordingly set him at liberty. As the whole attendant party were retiring the officer openly declared that he would have the man again; and Mr. Wilkins hearing it, directed him to run for our office, which he did with all speed. The officer and his band gave chase, and Mr. Wilkins rapidly followed. At the time of the race, Mr. Stewart the Solicitor General and myself were attentively engaged in the office, tracing on a large globe the course of one of the prize vessels. The fisherman headed the race, and rushed into the office, upsetting our globe employment, but happily not ourselves; and passed into the adjoining office, from which there was a private door, leading to a parlour, and thence there was ready access to the rear of the premises, and there the man was safe. The officer was quickly after in the office, and had reached about the middle of it, when Mr. Wilkins appeared, and with his two strong arms seizing him round the waist, he literally hurled him into the street. He was a nimble and spirited youngster, and was soon upon his feet, and turning to his men gave them some charge, to keep watch or guard over the house. Mr. Stewart stepped forward, and gave him some proper caution and advice, on the point, and in a short time he left with his men, and the fisherman was speedily and joyfully on his way home.

Some time previous to the year 1810 an embargo by the United States Government was imposed on the trade between that country and these British Provinces.

It is probable that it was partly in retaliation or resentment for the injuries done to their commerce by the seizures of their vessels, as has been related in previous pages. Our population in Halifax and also in the towns and villages throughout the Province, especially those in the eastern parts of it, experienced serious privations and injury from the measure, especially in not being able to obtain sufficient supplies of flour and certain other needful articles, not adequately produced within our own borders, or readily and conveniently obtainable from any other country than the United States. During a part of that season of deficient bread supply, my own family, with several others, I believe in the town of Pictou, where I was then residing, were obliged to put up with hard biscuit, and some of it *musty*. One happy morning in the early part of September, 1810, as I well remember, a small vessel with a cargo of flour came in, and I went down to the wharf with twenty dollars in my hand, which I gladly paid for one barrel of it. There was much smuggling, I believe, at the lines, as they were called, between the two countries; and it is quite probable that the people in New Brunswick and on the western parts of our Province were not enduring the same privations as our eastern population. At that time there was but a very limited if indeed any export of flour from Canada.

I must now bring before my readers in the most accurate and comprehensive manner I can employ, the most important and in many respects the most interesting of all the subjects contained under this Title. I mean the former ton timber trade which during many

of those early years of our commercial and political history was most extensively prosecuted in very many of our ports especially in the Eastern section of the Province. In the year 1808 when I commenced my residence in the town of Pictou my personal acquaintance with the trade began, and I may say that my knowledge of it continued without intermission during about fourteen succeeding years. My readers may form some opinion of its extent when I inform them that on one day in the autumn of that year 26 square rigged vessels, ships, barques and brigs arrived in the harbor of Pictou from various ports in Great Britain to obtain return cargoes of ton timber chiefly pine. In the evening of that day I saw, to the best of recollection, all the captains of the 26 vessels assembled in the large common room of the hotel where I lodged, and I was quite amused in hearing, for the first time, in mingled and discordant tones the rather uncouth dialects of Yorkshire, Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, and some Scottish Counties, Some of them were talking about their previous voyages to Christiania, Christian Sands, and other ports in the Northern European nations; and from which they were I believe then shut out, through the influence and power of the great Napoleon over those nations. Moreover it may be here mentioned that there was then this further cause for the extensiveness of that trade to this Province, and the ports of these other American Provinces, that although the pine wood of those northern countries being of a more firm and durable quality is better for the *outside* work on dwellings, it is not so good for the *inside* work, and for other purposes as our pine, which is

also more easily wrought than the wood of those Northern countries.

This trade in our Province was then so extensive that a partner of the leading mercantile firm in Pictou informed me that one year they furnished cargoes of timber to as many as 70 vessels. During the same early period there were several other firms in Pictou which furnished cargoes, some of them in rather large numbers. I was further informed, that either in 1809 or 1810 the merchants in the town of Pictou alone, loaded with timber as many as 120 square rigged vessels. several of them of large tonnage. Estimating according to the average size of the vessels, this number must have taken away at least 40,000 tons, besides the other portions of valuable wood for small and convenient stowage. But, there were a great number of other ports, in the Eastern section of the Province, from which large or considerable quantities were yearly exported, and through rather a long course of years. As the lumber was then abundant and in general readily procured, and the prices both to the maker and the merchant were often high and profitable, if the business had been prudently and economically conducted it would always have been fairly remunerative; and all the persons engaged in it would have gone on improving their circumstances, from year to year. But this was far from being the case. The prospects of success seemed, indeed, to be so fair or rather certain, for a number of years, that most especially in the section of the province already mentioned, nearly all persons in one way or other were engaged in the business. In the year 1809 the average price of good pine timber,

in the port of Pictou, was £2 or even more, per ton. I have a good reason to remember it, for having commenced my residence in that town and having hired a house which I had agreed to repair, so great was the demand for ton timber, for immediate shipment, that it was rather as a favor that I procured a small quantity of it from the pond of one of my merchant friends at the rate of two guineas per ton. It was in that year, or the preceding one, that the incident occurred which I will now relate. I was sitting in that room of the inn where I lodged, which was reserved for the more respectable guests when a man, from the other end of the house, came into the room in rather a *reeling* state, and holding up a silver watch in each hand, exclaimed, "a few tons of timber will soon pay for these." And doubtless they would, at the current price of the timber which I have just mentioned; and this man being able to make a ton and a half or two tons a day. It is probable he purchased the watches from a speculative master of a ship, and the price of them would be about £3.10 each. Four tons of timber, delivered in the merchants pond, would more than pay for them. I knew this man's course until about the time of his death. He continued making timber, and also in his drinking habits, and from time to time came under my professional practice in the courts, either as plaintiff or defendant. From all which I heard concerning him, I have every reason to believe that to the last he continued intemperate, and died poor and embarrassed with debt. It is saddening to reflect that there were so very many in that day pursuing the same reckless and vicious course. It seemed then to be a settled

or understood thing, that the timber could neither be made in the woods, nor drawn out to the water, nor rafted to the pond, nor moved, measured or shipped, nor indeed anything whatever done with it, without the inspiriting aid of the drink. Such was the state of things, in this respect, that the following incident occurred in which a friend was concerned, as he personally informed me. A party were towing a raft of timber for him across a harbor and, when within half a mile, or less, of the place where they were to deposit it, they halted and sent a boat on shore for a fresh supply of spirits, and remained stationary until they procured it.

The merchant in order to obtain the timber supplied the liquor freely and largely, and generally on credit; and the people, one and all, drank it as freely and as fully; and in consequence, in the great majority of cases either sooner or later embarrassment or ruin was the result. A gentleman residing near one of the rivers of the Province where the timber business had been carried on for several years, informed me that scarcely one in twenty of the persons formerly engaged in it, at that river, prospered in the business, and he said to the effect that it was chiefly owing to that excessive use of intoxicating liquors. He further told me, that on one occasion a large party of persons were engaged for weeks together, forcing timber down the river, in cold weather, and often wet yet when the work was completed they all concluded that the spirits used while so engaged did them more harm than good. The last item of information on the point which I shall here offer concerning this branch of business, is indeed conclusive to show the

vast extent of the injury from the drinking practice, as well to individuals as with reference to the public or general prosperity. The particulars of this information, as they will now be given, were in substance communicated to me, personally, by a gentleman who for about twenty years had been conversant with the ton timber trade and knew all about it, having, for that time, been clerk and book keeper to a large mercantile establishment, which was very extensively engaged in the business. He stated that there were imported by that establishment alone from 300 to 400 puncheons of rum, besides other spiritous liquors, in a year; and that several other merchants in the place also imported large quantities of such liquors of different kinds. Nearly the whole quantity so imported were for consumption in that port, and in the adjacent places, and chiefly among the persons engaged in the timber trade. He further said, that it was estimated that in and about the manufacture of every ton of timber, and in bringing it down the river into a pond for shipment, there was consumed about a gallon of rum. The price of the timber to the manufacturer who sold it to the merchant was, on an average, during that period, about twenty-five shillings. The price of the gallon of rum when retailed through several hands, and in small quantities at a time, to the persons engaged in making the timber in the woods, hauling it out to the water, rafting it, perhaps ten or fifteen miles or more, to the timber booms, would not be less than eight shillings the gallon, or probably more. Here, then, was about one-third of the value of the timber lost to the parties engaged in making the article,

and disposing of it to the merchant, besides loss of time and other hindrances to profit through occasional spells of intemperance, and from other causes connected with the drinking practice. Such was the state of things in general throughout the whole of the business, as carried on formerly in this province, and also, as I have reason to believe, in the other North American Provinces. How could it be possible that a business, conducted under such improvident circumstances, would, generally speaking, be ultimately or permanently profitable to those engaged in it? It certainly was not so, but I positively assert, what indeed is now generally, and by many *deplorably* known, that this branch of business formerly, and when the prices were higher than now, was a failure, as to improving the circumstances of those engaged in it, and consequently, as to advancing the general prosperity. Farmers and others became impoverished or embarrassed, and the merchants with whom they dealt, being unable to procure from such debtors the amounts they required to keep their own credit good with those who supplied them abroad, or at home, in very many instances they were broken up and ruined. And this embarrassment or ruin was spread more or less through the whole of the business.

The value of land, and other property became, for a time, so reduced that the mansion of a mercantile gentleman, in Pictou, which, it was supposed, cost in its erection and completion, about £10,100, I was informed, was, after a few years, together with a large tract of cultivated land attached to it, sold for about £600. Farmers and others were injured by so much valuable *pine wood* being taken from their lands.

I have no hesitation in affirming, that the vast consumption of intoxicating liquors was the chief primary cause of all the embarrassments and other evils above described. In asserting this, and throughout the argument, I entreat the reader to bear in mind, the indubitable truth, that the amount expended in the use of intoxicating liquors, is just so much of an actual and final loss, as that use, even in the least degree, is not requisite in the conducting of any trade, or business whatever.

Some facts and remarks of the like description, will now be given, respecting our *fisheries*, during the same period; and unhappily, they will, at present, be in some degree applicable.

Perhaps there is no class of persons who, partly from the nature of their occupation, and from several other circumstances, have been more given to the free use of intoxicating liquors, than fishermen in all regions and as much so in this Province as any other country, in former years, if not, indeed, at the present time. It would almost seem as if they thought they could not, or ought not, to set or take up a net, or draw a seine, or cut or cure, or do anything else about the fish, without the assistance of strong drink. To a certainty, their practice universally was very much after that fashion. Not an owner or crew, even of a boat, thought of going to a fishing station, without the usual and requisite supply of the article; and when that was out, a fresh supply, as a matter of necessity, was speedily procured. If it could not conveniently be obtained from the merchant who furnished the outfit, it was got from one of the transient traders who, like vultures, were hovering

round, ready to furnish it, and to grasp in exchange the fish, cured, or uncured, which, in many instances, should, in common honesty, have been kept for the merchant who furnished the first supplies. It is well known, that our fishermen, as a class, have ever been deeply embarrassed with debt, and numbers of them constantly in indigent circumstances, and destitute of many of the ordinary conveniences and comforts of life. It is perfectly clear, that the consumption of intoxicating drinks was one of the principal causes of their depressed condition. It was formerly, with nearly every fisherman and is even now with very many of them in their accounts with the merchants for supplies, much the same as it was with the old Highlandman, who said of his account of £50 with the merchant, the "heft" of it was for rum. It will be but a moderate computation to say, that the owner of each boat, during the fishing season, and through the rest of the year, incurred debts for liquor, for himself and servants and family, to the amount of £12 or £15, or more. Then, in many instances, there would be loss of time spent in the drinking habit, or waiting for the fish to strike in,—of sacrifices of fish at reduced prices, promptly to obtain cash, or needed supplies, with other items of loss. The whole of such drawbacks, especially if the fishing season had been unfavourable, would often swell the whole loss, including the liquor accounts, to at least £25, or in some instances, even more. Many of the fishermen, being in this situation from year to year, they were unable to pay, in full, the merchants who supplied them, and these in consequence, in not a few instances, had, as they seem to

think, no other way of saving themselves from embarrassment or ruin, but by charging the fishermen exorbitant prices for the supplies they furnished, which, of course, was a further injury to the fisherman. By reason of all these losses, and their continuance from year to year, fishing lots and homesteads, and in some instances farms became deeply mortgaged, or made over to the merchants, who, when themselves in any strait or embarrassment, could not from such securities, or sources, raise the money they needed to keep their own credit good, or safely and profitably carry on their business. The following instance, among the hundreds of a similar kind, will serve to show the loss, in a pecuniary view, and the consequent drawback, as to prosperity, through the vast consumption of intoxicating liquors in the fishing occupation. The circumstances were related to me by the individual concerned, who resided in one of our western fishing settlements. He stated that he followed the employment in a small shallop, with two or three hired men, and that for the use of them all, he ran off as much as a puncheon of rum in the course of the year. Most probably, some others occasionally assisted to empty it. He said that the liquor was furnished to the men, according to custom, as the usual daily allowance, free of charge, and that besides this loss, the men through intemperance would occasionally cut and injure the fish so as to lessen their value. The puncheon of rum, in those days, would cost about £25, or upwards, which, with the injuries to the fish, and the loss of time by the men, through their occasional intemperance, would certainly swell the whole loss to £30 at least. It

will readily be seen, that this was a serious drawback, as to profit, or rather a serious loss in all seasons, and in one of scarcity of fish, would, together with the amount for wages, and keeping of the men, and all expenses of the shallop, &c., be almost ruinous to the skipper. Whether the fishing was in boat, shallop, or other vessel, the customary allowance of spirits was the same, and as the whole of the class,—skippers and men, and whether on shares, or otherwise, were following the same practice, the loss, in every season, and in various ways, was deeply injurious to all of them. Moreover, the fishing occupation, from its very nature, being always extremely precarious, it is no way surprising, but rather a matter of course, that under all those unfavorable circumstances the fisheries, generally speaking, have not been a source of profit to those concerned in them, whether merchants, masters, or men, or contributed as much to the wealth and advantage of the Province generally, as they certainly would have done had it not been for the enormous consumption of strong drink by all those engaged in conducting them. Similar injurious effects from the same destructive cause resulted in the gypsum or plaster trade, ship-building, agricultural and other employments so essential for promoting the public welfare.

Some information and remarks may here be profitably given on several other points and particulars connected with the fishery subject. And I can write with some confidence concerning them from the fact that my earliest youthful years were spent in the vicinity of the great mackerel fishery at Fox Island, Canso, and other

adjacent places, near to Guysborough, where was our family residence. These places, *then*, and for several years, I believe, were the most numerous attended and successful stations for that fishery on the coasts of this Province. On several of my passages along the coast I visited Fox Island station, by far the most extensive and important, where, as has been said, there were, at times, nearly a thousand persons in one way or other engaged about the fishery. The mackerel then taken at those stations were much larger and fatter than those taken on any of our coasts during many late years. One of them would give a full meal to a small family. I account for this difference chiefly from the following circumstances: These fish and some others, like certain *birds*, periodically migrate from, and to, different quarters. They commence their migration from Southern towards Northerly quarters early in the spring, and continue those migrations until the beginning of the fall, when they commence their return to the South. There are, therefore, according to the fisherman's classification, and the merchant's also, three descriptions and qualities of the fish, namely,—*spring*, *summer*, and *fall*. The last have attained their full growth and richness. These were called *bloaters*. In those earlier years of that fishery, but, comparatively few fishing vessels from the United States, and other quarters, frequented the waters of the gulf of St. Lawrence, but of late years, vast fleets of them resort there through the summer and until late in the fall, and with their immense fleets of nets, their baits, and other means intercept the great body of the fish, and obtain those of the largest sizes and richest

qualities; and thus, at our fishing stations above named, and all along our coast from east to west, that fishery has been diminished, and in some seasons a very great failure; and the fish of a smaller size, and deficient in fatness. I may possibly be mistaken in the opinion here expressed, but from what I have known of this fishery for many years, this is the only way in which I can satisfactorily account for the above mentioned difference in the fish as to size and quality.

In proceeding to treat further, on the public affairs and interests of the Province, in those earlier years of its history, it will, no doubt, be interesting to many of my readers to be informed concerning them during those periods, especially those connected with the commercial and agricultural interests; and to exhibit and explain the causes which, soon after the conclusion of the war with France and the United States, produced depressions and other deeply injurious effects to those interests, especially the commercial. The relation of them will, in some degree, be appropriate and instructive in reference to the *present* generally prevalent depression in commercial and many other branches of business; as this depression has, in a great degree, proceeded from the same causes which produced that former distressed and injurious condition of commerce and other employments and affairs. In giving information concerning that former unhappy condition of those interests and affairs, I have thought that it will be more *accurate* and *satisfactory* to convey it, by some extracts from the work mentioned in a former page, which I published towards the close of that depression, than to give it merely from

present recollections. The following portions of that Work will, I conclude, with a few slight alterations, be the most interesting and instructive:—

“To commence with the higher and middle classes, it may be remarked that habits of luxury, dissipation, and extravagance, prevailed among these to an extreme and very injurious extent. It is probable, that with several in the capital of the Province, some of those habits had their origin in an improper imitation of the style and fashionable conduct of the principal characters in the extensive military and naval forces and establishments, which have always been kept up for the protection of the colony. The manners of these, seldom or never fail to have a very marked effect on most of the persons in civil offices and situations; and throughout the classes which have been named. This, however, had comparatively but a limited effect in forming those injurious habits. They have chiefly been engendered and confirmed from the wealth which, at particular periods, was rapidly accumulated by large numbers engaged in commercial pursuits. The mercantile interest has ever been the prevailing, and indeed it may be said, the overbearing one, in this Province. “During the arduous and long continued contest with France, but more especially during the hostilities with the United States, a variety of circumstances concurred to render some portions of our commerce extremely successful. The rapid acquisition of wealth, by many engaged in its speculations and pursuits, and the many alluring prospects of gain, affected nearly all classes and descriptions of persons; and stimulated large numbers to

enter upon that apparently speedy course for originating and establishing their fortunes. The *mania* was so universal and powerful that some quit the plough, others the workshop, and dissatisfied with the gradual but certain profits they were acquiring, they rushed into all the bustle, the intrigues, and perplexities of trade. During those periods of commercial prosperity some possessing superior information and skill, became very wealthy. Of these, not a few, of weak and vain minds in the acquisition of their wealth, could not refrain from its ostentatious and gratifying display, and hastened into various modes and scenes of dissipation and extravagance. Others, who were not so successful, were influenced by their example, and impatient of delay until the means of securing the full and continued gratification of their weak or corrupt desires could be obtained, rushed at once into the same rounds of folly and dissipation, in which it would seem they were satisfied to exhaust the profits of their employments as fast as they were acquired. All ranks seemed infected with the same passion for sensual indulgence, and scarcely any other emulation or competition appeared to exist, but who should surpass in splendour of various decorations, or in the extravagance and profusion of festive entertainments. It would have been accounted a proof of ignorance of the modes of civilized and genteel life to have found a shop-keeper behind his counter, or a merchant in his office after a certain hour in the day. A stated portion, in the middle part of it, was quite sufficient for attendance in these places; the remainder was exhausted in the enjoyments of the convivial board, and

a late hour in the night found the same persons at the gaming table, or engaged in some frivolous but expensive amusements. There were, undoubtedly, some who refrained from those excesses, and employed their efforts and prudence to secure the means for their future support and comfort; but the remarks which are here made, most extensively and justly applied. In describing the habits and manners of a people they can only, with propriety, be given in *general terms*. Immersed in dissipation the majority seemed to imagine that the season of prosperity would have no termination. They did not apprehend, or reflect, that the circumstances which then concurred so highly to favor the trade and commerce of the Province, were merely what may be called extrinsic and *adventitious*, and that during their operation some of the principal sources of its real and permanent prosperity were not receiving any extension or improvement whatever."

The season of prosperity did terminate; and the numerous insolvencies which almost immediately ensued, occasioned extreme public agitation and distress. The failures of some who were extensively employed in mercantile pursuits, and who had deeply engaged in those rounds of folly and extravagance, accelerated the downfall of numbers of others, and that credit and confidence, which when restrained within the ordinary limits of prudence, afford vigour and extension to trade, appeared to be shaken to the very foundations. In the capital of the Province in particular the most gloomy distrusts and apprehensions prevailed, and, in many instances, to *abundance* and *rejoicing*, distress and *despondence* succeeded.

But the evil consequences of those habits did not stop here. As is ever the case they produced a disregard of all honest and moral obligations. Many of those persons had not virtue and fortitude sufficient to struggle with their embarrassments and difficulties, and to strive, by a course of honest industry and prudence, to satisfy the lawful demands against them ; but soon after their failures became known, or through dread of impending insolvency, they absconded from the country.

The gaols were, for some time, crowded with others, who after being released, upon giving up what they chose to declare themselves possessed of (which but seldom was worth the acceptance of their creditors) either left the Province or remained within it as mere drones, or as burdens to others.

In conformity with the course of investigation and remark, which has been professed to be pursued in these sheets, it is now time to enter, separately and pointedly, upon a view and explanation of the different sources from which the general prosperity of the Province must be derived ; and to endeavor to point out and illustrate the means which can most effectually be employed to extend and improve those advantages.

"It need scarcely be remarked, that Agriculture and Commerce are two of the principal sources of the wealth and prosperity of every civilized country. In this Province, to this, the fisheries must undoubtedly be added. Upon our improvements in these *three*, but particularly on Agriculture must our public welfare be ever chiefly dependent.

Commercial pursuits, it has already been remarked,

have acquired, in the civilized world, a preponderance, even rather too powerful. The lust of gain, so universally prevalent, and which these pursuits chiefly contribute to nourish and increase, invariably greatly reduces or extinguishes nearly every honest and virtuous feeling or desire.

From an examination of the history of several countries, which have attained great eminence in these pursuits, it may be discovered that they have very little tendency to illustrate and improve the nobler and more estimable qualities of the human character. It is interesting and instructive to trace in the memoirs of the nation to which we belong, their progress in those pursuits and the different opinions which at different periods have been entertained respecting them; and the effects they have produced upon sentiments and manners. For many centuries after the earlier and more authentic records of its history, commercial employments were held in very little estimation, and those who pursued them were considered as scarcely ranking above the lowest order of the people. They have progressively increased in respectability and importance, in the general opinion; and at present maintain the most preponderating influence, and even claim to be ranked with the most learned and liberal professions.

It were needless and unprofitable to inquire here with what degree of propriety such a claim is advanced. After all which may be asserted on every side, the true rule by which to judge of the distinction to which any profession or occupation is entitled, is, to consider how far its habits, and the scenes in which it is usually

exercised, are calculated to improve the ardour and sensibility of the heart, and the vigour, the elevation, and magnanimity of the mind.

Those pursuits, it is true, have contributed to improve the exterior of life, but it may very reasonably be doubted, whether their great prevalence, has tended to augment the sum of human virtue and happiness.

Every condition of man, from that of rudeness and even barbarism, to that of the utmost refinement in manners, and in arts, has its advantage and defects. In his rude and artless condition, although deficient in those more gentle and attractive qualities, which embellish, or give a charm to so many of the scenes and occupations of life, he is found to possess in their greatest vigour and extent some of those qualities which enoble his native character. His principal characteristics are an ardent devotedness to the cause of his country, and a fervent and unshaken attachment to his kindred and his friends. To these he clings, through every vicissitude, and from their defence and protection, in the hour of danger, no threats can deter, no proffered rewards can allure him.

When his outward manners are refined, through the long continued influence of civilization and commercial pursuits, yet he is frequently found to be selfish and more or less unjust, ready to trespass upon the rights of others, and to sacrifice the best feelings of his nature to his avaricious and selfish desires. With such persons all attachment to country, is now made to depend upon gain. Let them be deprived of this, no matter in what manner, and the tie as to country is immediately

severed. Secure them in the possession of their gains and they will readily acquiesce in any political change which is proposed or established. Undoubtedly there have always been some, or many, engaged in those pursuits, who are exceptions to these observations, and whose integrity, patriotism, and liberality of mind, the habits of their occupation cannot corrupt; but the general description just given will on candid examination be found too correct.

Those pursuits, when conducted within ordinary bounds, have certainly contributed much to the ease and the comforts of life, and been productive of many other beneficial effects. From them, many of the improvements made in society, have wholly arisen; and on their moderate pursuit does society itself, in the present state of the civilized world, greatly depend for support. What has here been advanced with respect to them, is meant merely to show the general tendency they have to engender and nourish that insatiable desire of gain, which lead to general corruption, and to weaken that patriotism and public spirit in which the strength and the safety of a people must ever chiefly consist.

Of all the sources from which the improvement and prosperity of this Province are to be derived, Commerce is the one which has long enjoyed the greatest portion of advantages, and which, at present, stands the least in need of being stimulated and encouraged by legislative regulations. It is indeed that interest which, wherever it becomes firmly established, is most likely to make its power and influence successful. Under free constitutions like ours it requires from Government little else

than a careful oversight to prevent and suppress the frauds and mischiefs it is so likely to introduce. Of all classes in society traders may be least expected to do anything out of the line of their own immediate advantage.

We have unfortunately so long been accustomed to view every thing relating to our *general prosperity*, through the medium of trade, that too many among us have come to consider that nothing can operate to weaken or retard that general prosperity, which tends to the advancement of that particular interest. So far from this being the case it is undoubtedly true that the very extensive and successful prosecution of commercial pursuits, which for a long period of time and until a few years past prevailed in this Province, by alluring a disproportionate part of our population to engage in them, thereby obstructed the advancement of the *general welfare*.

Upon extended and attentive consideration it would appear that commercial pursuits are more or less productive of beneficial effects of a general description, and which are likely to remain durable, as the articles with which they are supplied, and about which they are occupied, are in a greater or lesser degree the products or manufacture of the country in which those pursuits are conducted. This, it is conceived, may be taken as a very fair criterion by which to estimate the real and permanent advantages to be derived to a country, from the extensive prosecution of commerce.

If the articles which form the exports of any country, and in which its trade is conducted are mostly

of its own produce and manufacture, but, particularly, if they are chiefly the products of its husbandry, its trade can scarcely be encouraged and pursued too extensively. While this is extended a proportionate increase of employment is afforded to its labor at home, for the procuring of the products and manufactures with which to support it. If the trade of such a country should experience a temporary stagnation or decay from an alternation in the channels of commerce, or from a change in political affairs, yet still, from possessing within itself the means for supplying the absolute wants of its population, and from its general prosperity having been gradually advancing, its distresses or embarrassments will be less severe and extensive, and of shorter continuance than they would have been if its trade had been of a different or foreign description.

In such a country therefore as Great Britain, where most of the articles in which its trade is carried on are its own manufactures and products, or those of its colonies, and where agriculture is so highly esteemed and so extensively and successfully pursued, commerce cannot flourish without producing profitable effects upon every other interest.

On the other hand, if the trade on which a country is greatly dependent, and which it is extensively engaged in pursuing, is one to which but few articles the produce of its husbandry or of home manufacture are supplied, but which chiefly consists in procuring from foreign countries the chief means of subsistence for its population, the general prosperity of that country will seldom be raised very high, and will always be insecure

and precarious. Such a trade may long continue flourishing and successful, and many of those directly engaged in its prosecution may even amass much wealth, yet so soon as it suffers any decrease or temporary suspension from a change of political affairs, or from any other cause, general embarrassments, privations, and distress will speedily ensue. Not only so, but the duration of these unhappy effects, and the return of a general supply of the needful means of subsistence and comfort will entirely depend on the return of trade into its former profitable channels to whatever period this may be delayed. The welfare of such a country will ever fluctuate with the fluctuations of trade, and the events of a war, or the success of a fortunate or favorable rival, will presently reduce it from a state of abundance and rejoicing to that of depression and of general privations and despondency.

It is upon the internal improvement of a country, and the measure of the chief necessities of life which it is made to supply to its population, that its solid welfare and happiness must ever depend.

There probably never was a country where commerce was more *unconnected* with husbandry than it has hitherto been in this Province, and where its success and advancement contributed less to the promotion of general prosperity. It has even been the case, as has already been in some degree explained, that the success of this interest operated for a very considerable period of time greatly to impede the agricultural improvement of the country. This was chiefly owing to the nature of our trade, which has hitherto been one to

which until lately scarcely any article the produce of our husbandry was supplied for exportation. The ability to furnish for that purpose, any considerable portion of articles, drawn from this source, appeared so difficult of attainment, and to lie at such a hopeless distance that our mercantile people were led to disregard and undervalue this interest, and to consider their success in their pursuits, as not at all depending upon its advancement; and consequently they employed no portion of their capital, and used no exertions or influence to promote it.

Agriculture has, in truth, a more extensive influence upon every occupation in society, with regard to its profitable pursuits, than many are apt to imagine, and than some would be willing to allow. It is upon the productions of the ground, that all trades and occupations in civilized society chiefly depend for subsistence. According therefore to the abundance or the scarcity of these, but particularly of the several grains so will nearly every calling and employment in life, either prosper, or languish, and consequently so will the whole society be either wealthy and independent, or poor and embarrassed.

Upon taking an extended and unprejudiced view of the different sources on which the real wealth and general and permanent prosperity of this province must depend, it will appear that as there is none which is of such vital importance as our Agriculture, so there is none, which has until very lately been so greatly neglected. For this a number of causes may be assigned, which will presently be treated of. In the mean

time it may be remarked that the pursuit of it was long, and generally considered of minor consequence, towards promoting our general welfare, and indeed appeared to have been looked upon by many among us, as an occupation of rather an inferior and degrading description.

If viewed, however, in a proper light, it must be confessed that there is no employment in life which is more truly honorable, and which tends more directly to ensure true independence, comfort, and happiness. It was the express appointment of the wise and benevolent Creator that man should procure the chief means of his subsistence by the cultivation of the ground. The earth was not appointed to yield him this subsistence without any exertions on his part, on the contrary he was commanded to seek it by his own bodily labour. In this injunction, the truly pious and enlightened, in reflecting upon the many fatal passions, vices, and follies, to the power of which mankind are exposed,—will recognize the dispensation of an all wise and merciful Providence.

In the most enlightened ages of the world, and in many of the most mighty and celebrated states that ever flourished, Agriculture has been esteemed the most honorable and laudable of employments. Both in ancient and modern times, the wisest and most illustrious characters have not only employed their talents in studies for its improvement, but have not been ashamed, personally and actively to engage in its pursuits.

There is also no occupation which so powerfully leads to independence in every respect. The husbandman, in the cultivation of his fields, seeks the means of

subsistence immediately from the bounty and never failing goodness of his Creator. However poor or even destitute he may be, at the commencement of his labours, yet when not unjustly coerced or oppressed by his fellow men, seldom does he fail, by the exercise of industry and prudence, to procure in the course of a few seasons, an ample supply for all his wants. He is not required as those in many other occupations in life are almost of necessity drawn, to flatter, to gloss over, or to palliate the vices and follies of mankind; to minister directly to their vanities, to crouch beneath their arbitrary dictates, or to submit to their whims and caprices. Under a free and equitable government, secured in the enjoyment of his possessions, the habits of his calling tend to invigorate and preserve the health of his body, and to nourish and enlarge the freedom and independence of his mind, and to foster the best feelings and affections of his heart.

Whatever may be the fluctuations or changes in all other occupations in society, or in political relations; and however extensive may be the distress thereby introduced, he need not look beyond his own fields, for the absolute necessities of life. As far as respects himself and his own domestic circle, his sources of satisfaction and enjoyment will continue the same.

His occupations also tend much less than any other to engender and nourish those harrassing anxieties, perplexities, and cares which sadden and embitter so many of the other employments and scenes of this state of existence. Having done his part for procuring the means of support, he looks immediately to his Creator for his

reward, in their regular and adequate supply, and is not exposed to those frauds and impositions, and that injustice, which are so greatly prevalent in many other occupations, and through which, such numbers have been suddenly reduced from a state of affluence and abundance, to that of poverty and dependence.

There is also no foundation on which the real wealth the independence, and the happiness of nations, can so effectually be raised, and can so securely and permanently repose, as upon Agriculture. This, indeed, follows as a matter of course, if what has just been advanced, with respect to individuals pursuing that occupation, be correct and well founded. The welfare of a state, if rightly considered, will ever be found to depend upon that of the members composing it. If these, considered apart, enjoy abundance and happiness, the state they compose may truly be denominated, wealthy and prosperous. On the other hand, with what propriety can that country be said to be truly independent and flourishing, the individuals of which depend upon a foreign quarter for the first necessities of life, and at times are in want of an adequate supply, and consequently are embarrassed and unhappy.

All foundations indeed but this, for national prosperity, are insecure and precarious. Commerce, which in modern times, is made rather too much the business of nations, and which, it would appear, is considered by great numbers, as the only occupation worthy of pursuit, is constantly exposed to fluctuations and vicissitudes. It follows, therefore, of course, that the country which is chiefly dependent for its prosperity upon this

source, can never be justly considered as in a state of real and solid security. A change in political relations, restrictions imposed upon trade, or the events of war, will suddenly reduce such a country from a state of power, abundance and rejoicing, to one of general weakness, distress, and despondency.

On the other hand, a nation in which Agriculture is so extensively pursued, as to afford all the absolute means of subsistence to the whole of its population is not exposed to any of those evils, but if cut off from all foreign intercourse, may still remain prosperous. It is scarcely, indeed, too much to affirm, that no country was ever yet, for any great length of time, invariably and eminently prosperous, in which agricultural pursuits were lightly esteemed or neglected. This may be exemplified and proved by the histories of a number of nations and countries, both in ancient and modern times. Among the Romans, that ambitious and arbitrary people who were almost constantly engaged in the most formidable and sanguinary wars, those pursuits were, from the first period of their story, held in high estimation, and their most celebrated characters were often found actively employed in advancing them. Their improvements in agriculture kept pace with their conquests; and wherever they established their dominion they caused the labors of the field immediately to flourish. To this cause, as much as to the dread of their arms, or the nature of the government they established, may be ascribed the acquiescence under their dominion, of the countries they subjugated, and the long continued preservation of the conquests they made. It was not until

late in the decline of the mighty empire they established, that the empress of so many nations was herself made to depend upon remote parts of her territories for the first necessary of life, and that she sometimes underwent even the horrors of famine. The permitted decline of this most important of all occupations, may be considered as rapidly accelerating the downfall of that mighty and close cemented fabric, which the wisdom and the labors of so many generations had been employed in rearing. Even Carthage, which was extensively engaged in commerce, and which carried its pursuits to a greater point of perfection, than any other country of her time, bestowed upon agriculture, special and assiduous attention. It is recorded, that in the destruction of that city, by its exasperated and merciless rival, when every monument of its art, every other record or memorial of its science, were diligently sought after and destroyed, the valuable works it possessed upon Agriculture were carefully preserved by that rival, who assiduously employed the rich store of information they contained, to advance its own knowledge of that honorable occupation.

In the history of many modern nations also we may trace the important consequences of a careful attention to extend and improve it. In Great Britain this occupation has for many ages past been held in very high estimation; and has, at this time, arrived at a state of perfection, which probably was never surpassed. If it had not been for an extensive and unremitted application to its pursuits, how deplorable would often have been the situation of that country. In those periods of

its history when assailed by the most formidable combinations of foes, and when its commerce was excluded from almost every part of the continent of Europe, if it had not possessed within itself the chief means of subsistence, great distress would have ensued to its people, and the bulwark of freedom would have been shaken and weakened to its very foundation. Through its attention to agriculture, even more than through its commerce, was that magnanimous country enabled to support those mighty fleets and armies which were engaged in preserving its own independence, and in redressing the wrongs and restoring the freedom of several subjugated nations.

It may also very fairly be concluded that the power and the greatness of France have always been principally owing to its extensive cultivation and pursuit of the different branches of husbandry. Even under the most arbitrary and oppressive systems of government, heavily burthened with taxes, at one period, and its commerce driven from the ocean at another, through its attention to agricultural employments that country has almost constantly kept its vast population sufficiently supplied with all the chief necessities of life.

In Spain, although many parts of it are highly favored by nature, extreme inattention to the tillage of the ground, for procuring the absolute means of subsistence, prevailed for a great length of time, and the great improvements in husbandry which in modern times have been made, are in that nation not generally understood. Hence it is notorious, that the peasantry and the lower orders of people in that country, are in a

more impoverished condition, and even more deficient in intellectual improvement, than those of most other countries in Europe.

The colonies in the West Indies, afford another instance of the unhappy and dependent state of a country in which Agriculture is not pursued to such an extent, as to furnish the chief means of subsistence to its inhabitants. Although those colonies possess such extensive sources of wealth, and supply a great portion of the civilized world with such a variety of comforts, and though such numbers, there, riot in affluence, and dazzle with their splendour and magnificence, yet they have almost constantly been making complaints, and doubtless not without reason, of their not being sufficiently supplied with some of the chief necessaries of life; and have even at certain periods experienced some of the miseries of want. It is well-known that they have always been greatly dependent upon other countries for those necessaries and especially for bread.

Consequently they have always been exposed to all the embarrassing effects of fluctuations in trade. Through a change in political relations, restraints, or interdictions imposed upon commerce, or alterations in its channels, preventing them from obtaining regular and ample supplies of those necessaries, or from the concurrence of causes, through which the prices of their productions have been lowered in the markets to which they were exported, they have often been reduced within a short time, from a state of abundance and prosperity to one of real distress and despondency. A country in this situation can never be said to be truly

wealthy or to have its prosperity resting upon a solid and permanent basis. So frequent, and so extensive were the distresses and embarrassments they formerly experienced, and so fully sensible did they become, of the true cause of them, that they have at length resorted to the expedient of appropriating greater portions of their lands to the raising and procuring of those articles of food, the most essentially requisite. In consequence of this, they have latterly, in a great measure, prevented the recurrence of those evils.

Of those persons who came to this province as previously mentioned to prosecute trade, but very few have contributed their exertions or done anything whatever directly for the advancement of our Agriculture. It would appear from their conduct as though they considered themselves, while here, in a state of exile or banishment. They have, in general, seemed to care very little about the prosperity of the Province, but have merely attended to the advancement of the particular pursuits in which they were engaged, and more especially to the acquisition of individual gain. For acquiring this they have indeed been sufficiently attentive, by employing all the means within their power, and from time to time, as they obtained it, have been as careful to hasten it away to some other country. After securing the amount, which probably they had limited themselves to acquire here, they have speedily departed to enjoy it elsewhere.

Instead of acting in that selfish manner, if they had removed from the capital, to other parts of the province and had been satisfied to enjoy the tranquility, the

moderation and happiness of a rural life, and to endeavour by their example and influence, to improve and to forward our Agriculture, they would have effected more for the promotion of our general prosperity, than could have been accomplished by all other means. If they had gone still further, and loaned out their money judiciously, to the farmers around them, who might have required it, or had employed it immediately themselves in making Agricultural improvements, they would have contributed yet more to the public welfare, and through these means alone, the Province would, long before this, have been in a highly prosperous state; and quite independent of every other country for most of the chief necessities of life. The exertions, and the example of those persons, in forwarding the Agricultural occupations, in which themselves were engaged, would have aroused and stimulated those of inferior means and information around them, and the general extension and improvement of those occupations would have speedily followed.

We may now proceed to take a view of the subject of immigration to the Province, which must undoubtedly be considered as one of very serious importance to our Agricultural interest, and indeed to every other we possess.

For several years past it has been flowing in an uncommonly extensive degree, from the old world to the new, and especially from the British Empire, to different parts of North America.

It must be matter of regret to all who wish well to these Provinces that by far the greater number of per-

sons who are thus quitting the Empire, take up their residence under the government of the United States. Even many of them who have landed in this Province, after remaining a short time, have directed their course to that quarter. If proper means had been employed, and the public encouragement held forth, which might so readily and extensively have been granted, most of these would undoubtedly have been retained in the Province.

If only the disloyal and turbulent, were thus leaving the British Empire, and bending their course to those countries, their departure and their forbearing to settle in these British Provinces, might be considered as most favourable events. There are, however, great numbers of loyal and valuable subjects among them, who from the pressure of taxes, and from not having been able to procure sufficient employment to afford a maintenance for themselves and their families, or from a variety of other justifiable reasons are with sorrow and reluctance, abandoning the countries of their birth and the institutions they had long been accustomed to love and revere.

If these persons were sufficiently apprised of the numerous natural advantages of this Province, of the equitable nature of the government, of the freedom, the exemption from burdensome taxes and the many other blessings which are here enjoyed; and if such facilities and public assistance to their settlement on the unimproved lands of the country were afforded, and held forth to their notice, as might be very readily granted, great numbers of them would undoubtedly take up their residence here.

It is not merely by the application of industry and skill, in the cultivation of lands already under improvement, that we must seek to procure a portion of bread, and of the other chief means of subsistence fully adequate to our consumption. In several of our counties it is requisite, that the forests should be more extensively cleared, and that an addition should be made to the number of those who are occupied in husbandry. To those who have long been resident in the Province, and have been able to inform themselves of its affairs, and the measures pursued during some former administrations of its government, it must be obvious, that the principal cause has been the fatal practice which prevailed during those periods, of granting or allotting very extensive tracts of land to a few individuals. Some of these have never even been within the Province, while others who were present when they obtained them, soon after departed, and have never returned. Of all, indeed, who are either absent or here, very few, comparatively, have done anything towards settling or improving the large and valuable tracts they received. Some of these tracts were granted through the direct authority and command of the government of the parent state, but by far the greater number of them were made over in one form or other, by the presiding authority here.

It has, moreover, been particularly unfortunate and injurious, that it is in that quarter of the Province, to which immigration has chiefly been directed, and in which the greatest proportion of fertile and valuable land is found, that the greatest quantity of it is held in the manner described."

There is an occurrence relating to a public measure on which I think it well to afford information which I am confident is not possessed by any other living person. When the erection of the present Provincial Parliament Building was in contemplation, several members of the assembly, including myself, had an interview with Sir John Sherbrooke, then Lieut.-Governor, at the present Government House, and conversing with him regarding the intended building, he spoke to us concerning it in such terms as the following, as well as I can recollect them, and in his usual prompt and decided manner. "I tell you, gentlemen, I could not afford to live in this building and keep up an establishment suitable to it, if it were not for my military pay and allowances. I would advise you to make this house the Provincial building for your legislature and public offices, and grant about £10,000 (the sum he named) which I think will be quite sufficient to build a suitable house for your Lieut.-Governor." If this sensible and economical advice had been taken and carried out £50,000 or more would have been saved for other public and useful purposes; for as I have understood the cost of the present building, when completed, was nearly, if not quite £70,000. I will here relate another incident respecting Sir John of a somewhat public nature; and which decidedly proved that he was, as a civil ruler, as impartial and upright as he was brave and active as a military commander. In this latter capacity, as was well known, he deserved the same appellation as Napoleon gave to to his Marshal Ney,—“the bravest of the brave.”

The following is the incident alluded to. A war-

warrant of survey for a tract of forest land in the present county of Antigonish had been obtained by a man who had it surveyed and marked off to him, and if I recollect rightly had made some clearance on it. About the same time, or shortly after, a priest residing in that quarter obtained a similar warrant of survey, and either by some blundering in the warrant, or by a surveyor, on laying off this last tract it took in a part or the whole of the former tract, and the owner of it was under the necessity of applying by petition to the Governor to be confirmed in his possession of the land. I was one of the members for the county at the time and with my colleague presented the petition to Sir John. He promptly appointed an early time for hearing and determining the case, and notified the Attorney General, the Surveyor General, the Provincial Secretary, us the county members, and the priest to attend at his examination of the case. We all met Sir John at Government House and he made all needful and pointed enquiries from all those public officers, and all the rest of us, and after his full investigations all round and receiving and considering all the information he addressed the priest to this effect: the petitioner, sir, must not be disturbed in his possession, he must have the land and you must get your tract in some other quarter, and thus it was settled. It was on the day the mail packet for England was to sail, and he kept her waiting about an hour or more until this land case was determined.

There is an event of a public and very serious nature, which occurred so many years ago that there can, *now*, be but few persons in the province except myself

who personally witnessed it, or have even heard of it. The relation I will now give of some of its chief particulars, and the incidents connected with it will, I am convinced, be interesting to most, if not all my readers. In the autumn of the year 1811, the most tremendous gale, or rather *hurricane*, which has occurred since the commencement of this century, swept over the whole province and its coasts, especially in the eastern division of it. I was in the town of Guysborough at the time which was directly in the line of its greatest fury and destructiveness. It commenced in the afternoon, from a southern quarter, and soon became of the most furious description. I was busily engaged in preparing writings in cases in which I was engaged, depending in the court which was to meet in a few days. Feeling the house shaking rather violently, I raised my eyes to the window in front of my seat and perceived that the parish church, which stood on a hill a short distance off, was totally prostrate, and its lighter materials were flying about like so many feathers. I hastily secured some bundles of paper in my pockets and partly for personal safety as well as to witness the immediate effects of the hurricane went out of the house but soon found that I could not keep my feet without some kind of support and therefore got hold of a young willow sapling which though it was constantly bending near the ground was sufficient to prevent my being blown down. While in that situation I saw a vessel which was lying at anchor in the harbor her sails down and under the partial shelter of a line of beach suddenly turned over and in about five minutes no part of her

could I see but a few feet of the top of one of the masts. I heard afterwards that while the crew were endeavoring to make their escape in a boat one of them was drowned. A vessel which was coming up the bay must have gone down with all on board as none of them were ever heard of. Some on the land also I heard were killed and others seriously injured in the destruction of their dwellings or otherwise. The flocks of geese were blown from the land into the water as their own feathers would have been by any ordinary wind. A large part of a roof of a dwelling house near to the one in which I was lodging was carried into a field several hundred yards off and driven like a plough share into the soil. Many severe gales of wind have I been in both on land and at sea, during the sixty-eight years since but none of them of scarcely more than half the violence of the one I am describing. The appearance of the water on the harbour I cannot more fitly compare, than to the drifting of the snow in the most severe winter storm, so violently was it raised by the wind and driven along in one sheet of white and sparkling foam and spray. When setting out, soon after, on my journey home of about 100 miles, it was useless to think of travelling on horse-back, for nearly the first half of the distance, and therefore I commenced it on foot with a companion, a young gentleman who had been on a visit to his friends. On passing along the road through the farms, on the first 9 miles to the head of the river, I saw that many of the buildings had been entirely blown down, others unroofed or otherwise partially destroyed and very few but were more or less severely injured by the gale. From the

head of the river, where we remained the first night, there was a region of heavily wooded land for many miles around the direction of our journey. There were, or rather had been, two roads to the village, about 25 miles onward, and we concluded by advice to take that one of the two routes which, on the whole distance, had the lesser portion of wilderness. The first part, however, of this route was thickly wooded for about 13 miles, and without an inhabitant. Our friends at the county town we had left had kindly provided us with some cakes and other little eatable comforts, and each of us carried a bundle containing some absolutely needful articles of apparel. We took a very early breakfast, and a little after sunrise set out on our arduous and as it proved perilous journey. Neither of us had ever been on the route, and previous to the gale the road had been but narrow and but very imperfectly opened. Immediately on entering it we found the heavy trees blown down from the roots and entangled in every direction so that we could scarcely get on more than a dozen paces without being obliged either to creep under the fallen trees or clamber over and through their heavy branches. We persevered, however, in the best way we could, and hour after hour passed in the same laborious struggle onward. Often when mounted high on the branches of the trees there seemed, as far as the eye could reach, but little else than one entire mass of fallen and entangled wood, in some places scarcely a standing tree within the compass of an acre or more. At one time I was so much at a loss for the line of the road and fearing to lose it that I descended to the ground from the

boughs of the fallen trees and felt for the gravel or small stones by which to ascertain that we had not gone astray. We partook of our cakes, &c., as we needed, and consumed all toward the latter part of the day, still hoping to get out to the settlement, whither we were journeying before night arrived. But in this we were grievously disappointed, for darkness came on while we were yet in the wood. We halted by the side of a small brook that we might have water, and having prepared a place for repose with some bushes and other materials, the most suitable we could find, concluded of necessity to abide there for the night. After a short time the moon rose so large and bright that I thought it would give light sufficient to enable us to pursue our course, get clear of the wood and reach the desired village. But again were our hopes disappointed, for after struggling on for a short time we lost all trace of the line or road, and became so completely inclosed within a narrow space by the large fallen and entangled wood that we were compelled to remain there the rest of the night. In the morning the first difficulty was to find the line of the road which I knew ran nearly north and south, and as we had no compass I practiced the expedient of passing alternately for suitable distances east and west like a vessel beating to windward, and thus, after some time, found a spot which I knew to be a part of the road. We then went forward, but with the same difficulties as on the previous day, and it was not until nearly 12 o'clock that we reached the first house in the small village called Tracadie, chiefly inhabited by the French Acadians. Before our arrival the lower garment of my

companion, now called pants, but then trowsers, had become so tattered and torn that they seemed irreparable, and he cast away the wreck and supplied the needful with a pair which he had in his bundle. My condition was not quite so ragged and unsightly, but on reaching the house after lying in bed for a short time while a girl made some temporary repairs, I was enabled to make a tolerable fair or becoming appearance. While this repair was being accomplished a comfortable meal was provided for us, and I can well remember that the large pie composed of water fowl and other good things which was the chief dish was amply partaken of with keonest relish. No further serious difficulty occurred on the remaining 4 or 5 days of the journey home, as the storm had not been quite so violent in that section of the country, and the inhabitants had turned out and made the needful temporary clearances on the road.

There is an occurrence of a personal nature which, I think may, without impropriety, be introduced and described in this concluding part of my Treatise. If any excuse or apology is needed for its publication, it may be found in the statement that it is given for the instruction and benefit of my youthful readers, in showing them how seeming impossibilities and impediments to the fulfilment of any friendly or other laudable purpose may be overcome when there is a fixed and persevering determination to accomplish it.

I mentioned in an early page, that in the year 1811 I was elected a member of the Provincial Parliament. Its first meeting was appointed to commence on a certain *Thursday* in the ensuing February of 1812. It

was known that there would be a competition for the Speakership, between my friend Mr. Wilkins, and Mr. Robie. Several weeks before that time I received a very severe injury in one of my knees, from the kick of a horse, which confined me to the bed, in great pain, for nearly a fortnight, and when recovering I could only move about with a crutch or staff. The County Court, at Pictou, met on the *Tuesday* preceding that *Thursday* on which the House of Assembly was to meet. I was professionally retained in a number of the cases depending in the court, and was just able to limp to the court on *Tuesday*, and make arrangements as to those cases,—getting some compromised, others continued, or otherwise adjusted, so that my clients should not suffer any injury.

Being fully determined to be present at the meeting of the house, I set out alone early on that *Tuesday* night for Halifax, in a sleigh and hastened on. When I had advanced about 15 miles, near the head of Mount Tom, so called, I found a tree fallen across the road, and as there was a fence on each side, I was obliged to get out of the sleigh, and after some painful efforts got it over the tree, and went forward and reached Truro shortly after daylight. After waiting the needed time for refreshment for myself and horse, I went on until I reached an Inn called the half way house, 50 miles from Halifax. There I found the snow gone, and was informed that the state of the road was the same all the way to town. The sleigh, therefore, was now useless, but happily a saddle and bridle were brought forth by the innkeeper, and I was helped to the back of my steed,

with the foot of the able leg in the stirrup, and the wounded leg brought up, at the knee joint, over the shoulder of the horse, or pommel of the saddle, as found least painful or inconvenient. The horse could not be suffered to go at any other pace than a walk, and therefore he walked me all through the night, stopping occasionally for our needed refreshment of food. During a great part of the night snow was falling, but in a moderate manner, and shortly after daylight I reached the inn about nine miles from town, where I hired a wheel carriage, and arrived at my friend's house on Thursday morning in time for breakfast, and for the meeting of the House.

This exploit, if it may be so named, soon became very generally known in town, and was talked about in some circles for a day or two. But, after all that may be said of it, it was not any wonderful achievement, but merely such as any young or even middle-aged man could perform, by a firm and fixed determination to accomplish it.

I have often been reminded of the following saying of that eccentric writer,—Rev. Laurence Sterne, the author of that strange work, “*Tristram Shandy*,”—“Man betrays his own resources *ten* times, where nature does it *once*. There are many men, who in all stages of their lives, through their laziness and cowardice are like the slothful person mentioned in the Scripture proverb, and say,—I cannot go forth, “there is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.”

In here concluding this Treatise, I think I may fairly express the confidence, that I have even more

thau fulfilled the repeated requests mentioned at its commencement, that I would publish information concerning public events, and affairs which occurred in the Province during the earliest years of the present century; and I earnestly hope that the various narratives and events related, and the remarks thereon may be found generally interesting, and in some degree instructive also. And I will assume the freedom of expressing the further hope and earnest desire that the present and all succeeding generations of our people, under a gracious and beneficent providence, may find that by their active industry and integrity in their several professions and employments, the secular interests and prosperity of their country are largely promoted. But far higher reasons will they have for rejoicing and thankfulness, if there is an equal or greater advance in religious and moral attainments and social happiness.

